(d) The Government is aware of the developments regarding procurement of Defence items by our neighbouring countries. The situation is constantly assessed and appropriate steps are taken to ensure full defence preparedness.

Marketing of weapons by Ordnance factories

2574. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Ordnance Factories Organisation proposes to sell non-prohibited weapons like revolvers and pistols in open market, If so the details of the policy in this regard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Defence Ministry has decided to market its products in the open to curb the astronomical prices of the imported weapons, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether our weapons match the quality and price of imported ones such as Webley Scott and Colt, if so, whether Government are also contemplating to export such weapons; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) Non-prohibited bore weapons, namely 0.315 sporting rifle and 12 bore double barrel breach loading (DBBL) gun have been sold in the open market for long. These are marketed through authorised dealers. 0.32 revolver is not yet being sold in the open market to its limited production; this weapon is provided to certain specified categories of persons in need of security.

(c) and (d) The weapons produced by ordnance factories are of assured quality. Export of these weapons has not been made so far.

Protection of coastal belt

2575. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any new strategy has been evolved for protection of the coastal belt;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Saurashtra and Kutch and other areas of the coastal belt in Gujarat have been given any special protection status in this regard;

(d) whether instances of infiltration of terrorists in that State have been reported this year; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) There is no change in the existing practice of patrolling of the coastal belt.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) No instances of infiltration of terrorists in the State have come to the notice of Indian Navy and Coast Guard.

(e) Does not arise.

Decline in strength of army

2576. SHRI SOM PAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India has lost its position as the third largest army whereas Pakistan has considerably increased its armed manpower during the last few years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to keep a balance in the armed manpower strength to meet any eventuality ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) to (c) According to information available, there has been only a marginal accration to the stength of the Pakistani Army in the last five years. All developments impinging on our National Security are closely monitored by the Government for initiating appropriate and timely measures.

रूस से खरीदा गया सैनिक साज-सामान

2577. श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) भारत द्वारा रूस से खरीदे जा रहे सैनिक साज-सामान का ब्यौरा क्या है, और